

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 04532 300812Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 NSC-05 SP-02
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R 300732Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1355
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4532

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR MORG CA US KS
SUBJ: POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENT OF CANADIAN OFFICER TO UNC REAR

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS MAY 30, CANADIAN COUNSELLOR GEOFFREY CHARLEBOIS SAID THAT OTTAWA WAS NOW BEING URGED TO CONSIDER SUGGESTION WHICH HAD BEEN MADE FROM THE FIELD TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF KEEPING THE JAPAN UN SOFA INTACT BY ASSIGNING A CANADIAN MILITARY JAPANESE LANGUAGE STUDENT TO UNC REAR. HE SAID THAT PROPOSAL HAD BEEN MADE THAT A CANADIAN MILITARY OFFICER BE ASSIGNED TO UNC REAR IN JAPAN FOR TWO YEARS WHILE ACTUALLY UNDERGOING JAPANESE LANGUAGE TRAINING PREPARATORY TO TAKING UP A TWO-YEAR ASSIGNMENT AS DEFENSE ATTACHE IN CANADIAN EMBASSY IN TOKYO. AS EACH LANGUAGE STUDENT COMPLETED HIS TWO-YEAR STUDY PERIOD HE WOULD MOVE ON TO BECOME DEFENSE ATTACHE AND A NEW OFFICER WOULD BEGIN LANGUAGE TRAINING AND CONCURRENTLY SERVE AS OSTENSIBLE CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO UNC REAR.

2. THIS STRIKES US AS A VERY SENSIBLE WAY TO INSULATE UN SOFA FROM THE PERIODIC BUFFETINGS IT HAS UNDERGONE.
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WE RECOMMEND THAT USG SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE SHOULD THE OPPORTUNITY ARISE, IN VIEW OF THE JAPANESE POSITION THAT THE UN SOFA, AND THE VARIOUS BENEFITS IT PROVIDES, WILL EXPIRE WHEN THE LAST NON-U.S. MILITARY PERSON STATIONED IN JAPAN UNDER THE UN SOFA'S PROVISIONS IS WITHDRAWN. AT PRESENT THE SOFA IS BEING PRESERVED BY THE PRESENCE OF A FILIPINO OFFICER ASSIGNED TO UNC REAR.

WE WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IF THERE WERE A LITTLE
MORE MARGIN FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

3. SHOULD THE OPPORTUNITY ARISE, THEREFORE, EITHER
DEPARTMENT OR EMBASSY OTTAWA MAY WISH TO NOTE TO CANADIANS
AT THEIR DISCRETION THAT WE UNDERSTAND THAT A PROPOSAL
HAS BEEN MADE FOR ATTACHING A CANADIAN OFFICER TO UNC
REAR UNDER CONDITIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE AND THAT, WHILE
U.S. NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND DOES NOT WISH TO INTERFERE
IN DECISION THAT IS RIGHTFULLY AN INTERNAL MATTER FOR
GOC, SUCH ASSIGNMENT WOULD HELP INSULATE UN SOFA FROM
THREAT OF UNTIMELY DEMISE AND WOULD AID IN AVOIDING
CONFUSION AND NORTH KOREAN MISINTERPRETATION SHOULD UN
SOFA INADVERTENTLY BE PERMITTED TO EXPIRE. CHARLEBOIS
NOTED IN DESCRIBING THIS SUGGESTION THAT OTTAWA WAS
PRESENTLY BEING VERY TIGHT ON BUDGET AND, HE BELIEVED,
FOR THIS REASON HAD NOT AS YET BEEN VERY POSITIVE IN
ITS REACTION.
STERN

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